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## ML Directorate hosts annual Roadmap Review

by Timothy Anderl, Materials and Manufacturing Directorate

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — Leaders from industry, government and academia gathered at the Dayton Convention Center July 22-24 to participate in Air Force Research Laboratory Materials and Manufacturing Directorate's Roadmap Review.

The 2003 Roadmap Review, which hosted approximately 300 participants, followed the theme, "Materials and Manufacturing For Flight Into the 21st Century."

The purpose of the annual review was to provide information concerning the directorate's planned fiscal 2004 technology programs. The review offered participants insight into planned Air Force materials and manufacturing research and development activities, and the opportunity to offer suggestions and ideas on future directorate research and development efforts.

"The review was an opportunity for the directorate to interface with industry on the technologies that it's pursuing, providing government scientists and engineers the opportunity to meet new industry representatives and jumpstart future technical collaborations," said Craig Neslen, directorate Roadmap Review organizer.

"Effective collaboration, where the government and industry share information and are able to offer each other feedback, always results in a better technical product for the Air Force war fighter."

George Schmitt, chief of the directorate's integration and operations division, welcomed attendees with a brief introduction before director Charles Browning provided them with an overview on the directorate's mission of helping Air Force and industry maintain affordable and effective defense materials and manufacturing capabilities, and its science and technology perspective.

In addition, Jonathan Porter, the Air Force Deputy for Materials Technology, gave a presentation on the Air Force's future technology thrusts and areas of technical interest.

"The directorate looks forward to the review each year because it allows us to discuss our program accomplishments, present planning activities and future new starts, and provide our peers with direction and guidance that will keep the defense materials and manufacturing community headed in the right direction," Schmitt said.

In addition to overview briefings, which were provided by the directorate's scientists and engineers on each of the directorate's core technology areas, breakout workshops offered the opportunity for attendees to learn more in depth information about specific technology areas pursued by directorate researchers.



*Jonathan Porter, the Air Force Deputy for Materials Technology, gives a presentation on the Air Force's future technology thrusts, and areas of technical interest at the Materials and Manufacturing Directorate's Roadmap Review. (Photo by Bill McCaddy, Universal Technology Corporation)*

Workshops were conducted on the directorate's core technology areas.

Again this year, the directorate integrated its Small Business Innovation Research Industry Days with the review so that attendees could participate in both events.

The SBIR event allowed researchers to share topics for aero-

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space materials research and development that require innovative, “out-of-the-box” solutions. The SBIR program allows small businesses to compete for research funding and to help solve these technical and scientific challenges.

“The SBIR workshops provide an opportunity for the directorate to meet and begin collaborations with small businesses that specialize in very specific technology areas,” Neslen said.

“Information and strategies provided to participants will assist them in submitting strong, competitive, and cost-effective proposals in future research and development areas that will have a dramatic impact on Air Force technologies and capabilities.”

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